New rail project in Punjab

1512. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Punjab has proposed any new rail projects in the State; and

(b) if, so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Railways thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) As per available records, Government of Punjab has requested for a new rail line from Khemkaran to Firozpur to provide a direct connectivity between Amritsar to Firozpur. Earlier, a survey in this area had been conducted in February, 2002 for Patti (near Khemkaran) to Mahlam (near Firozpur) at a cost of Rs. 121.60 crore with rate of return as (-) 30.12%. In view of heavy throw forward of ongoing projects, limited availability of resources and unremunerative nature, the proposed new line was not taken up.

Rail service between Qazigund and Baramulla

†1513. SHRI AJAY MAROO: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) by when train services between Qazigund and Baramulla in Kashmir are going to commence;

(b) the details of proposed train services in other sections in Kashmir in addition to the above; and

(c) the plan to link Kashmir to other parts of country through rail?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Qazigund-Baramulla section is targeted for completion by May, 2008. Train services between Qazigund and Baramulla in Kashmir are planned to be commenced in 2008-09.

(b) Udhampur-Katra section is planned for completion by December, 2008.

(c) The plan to link Kashmir to other parts of the country through rail line is by 2011-12 after completion of works on Katra-Qazigund section.

Gauge conversion of Bhiladi-Samdari rail line

1514. SHRI PRAVEEN RASHTRAPAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the work of gauge conversion between Bhiladi-Samdari has been given to Rail Vikas Nigam Ltd.;

(b) if so, the details of the progress;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.